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## **Pesticides**

### **Group Says EPA's Rodenticide Mitigation Inadequate to Protect Environment, Health**

The Environmental Protection Agency's recent rodenticide mitigation decision fails to adequately protect human health and the environment, according to the advocacy group Beyond Pesticides.

"Human and wildlife exposures to these toxic chemicals, though slightly minimized, would nevertheless continue because of their continued availability for use in agricultural production and to pest control operators," the Washington, D.C.-based organization said in a June 4 statement. "Pest control operators will still be allowed to use these chemicals in homes, at their discretion, which means residential exposures continue, albeit at slightly lower levels," it said.

EPA's *Risk Mitigation Decision for Ten Rodenticides* was published in the *Federal Register* June 4 (73 Fed. Reg. 31,868; 104 DEN A-1, 5/30/08  [yv8WAAoAAAAAAYTBiNnAxcThxNw==](#) ).

Beyond Pesticides said it favors using a technique called integrated pest management to control rodents. The technique includes sanitation, rodent-proofing homes, and modifying habitat to make an area less attractive to rodents. The group also cited traps as affordable and effective rodent controls.

The group noted that "EPA, to its credit, recognizes that the use of toxic chemicals to control rodents is itself not effective rodent management" and recommends integrated pest management practices. But it said that "rodenticide labels must require the users to establish IPM practices and only allow the introduction of poisons as a part of this approach as a last resort."

In its decision, EPA said it was taking steps to protect children and wildlife by requiring enclosing products containing rodenticides approved for the consumer market in tamper-resistant bait stations. It also bars the sale of pellets and other loose bait for home use.

Highly toxic second-generation anticoagulants brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum, and difethialone will be removed from the consumer market to reduce the risks to wildlife and the environment in general, the agency said. However, EPA said it would continue to allow outdoor, above-ground farm and other commercial uses of these chemicals as long as they are contained in bait stations. Anticoagulants interfere with blood clotting, and death can result from excessive bleeding, the agency noted.

"The EPA's decision on rodenticides balances the availability of vital tools to deal with hazardous rodent problems with the need to minimize the potential exposure to children and non-target wildlife," Bob Rosenberg, senior vice president of government affairs for the trade group National Pesticides Management Association, said in a statement May 30.

"This is an important decision as it recognizes requisite professionalism in treatment and allows the pest management industry to retain the means for providing effective and affordable services that protect consumers from rodent-borne dangers," he said.

*The Beyond Pesticides statement on EPA's rodenticide mitigation decision is available at*  
<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/dailynewsblog/> 